

**Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition**

**August 26-27, 2003**

**Food Advisory Committee Meeting  
Additives and Ingredients Subcommittee**

**Latex Allergy  
Charge to the Committee**

FDA's concern with the use of natural rubber latex (NRL) gloves in retail food stores the food service industry is focused on whether such use may result in the production of unsafe food. Consequently, it is important to separate issues related to worker exposure and occupational safety from those of food safety. The task before this Food Advisory Subcommittee is to consider the available information relating to *food-mediated* latex allergic reactions and the use of latex food-service gloves in establishments that prepare food for public consumption. Specifically, there are several issues for which FDA would like feedback from the committee:

**Questions**

1. Has a positive relationship been established between the use of natural rubber latex gloves in food service and allergenic reactions to food served in food establishments, or sold at the market, based on the available data? If it exists, what is the strength of that relationship, and has it been shown to be causative?
2. If a positive relationship has been established and shown to be causative what scientific evidence is there, if any, on preventing allergy issues with food from the use of NRL gloves.
3. What additional questions need to be addressed to adequately understand this issue, or to determine whether there is a relationship and the strength of that relationship.